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House Republicans passed a repeal of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act by a vote of 245-189, mainly along party lines - only three Democrats joined with the Republicans. The vote prompted sharp reactions from all sides of Minnesota politics: Rep. Michele Bachmann called for the repeal of President Obama, while Rep. Keith Ellison said that Republicans voted dump 32 millions Americans' health coverage.

Minnesota's congressional delegation also split along party lines. Rep. Collin Peterson, who voted against health care reform last spring, also voted against its repeal. That prompted an attack from the Republican Party of Minnesota.

"With his vote against repealing ObamaCare this evening, Collin Peterson demonstrates that he is too liberal for the Seventh Congressional District," GOP chair Tony Sutton said in a statement. "While Peterson pretends to be a centrist, he continues to oppose repealing this dreadful bill which raises taxes on small businesses, cuts Medicare for seniors and contains an unconstitutional mandate requiring Americans to buy private insurance."

The GOP claims that the health care reform will cut Medicare has been claimed false by numerous fact-checkers. The constitutionality of the law is still being decided; a court in Michigan ruled it constitutional, another in Virginia ruled it unconstitutional.

The GOP also went after Rep. Tim Walz.

"With his vote against repealing ObamaCare this evening, Tim Walz has once again shown that he is too liberal for Southern Minnesota," wrote GOP chair Sutton. "Walz is wrong to support higher taxes on small businesses, deep Medicare cuts for seniors and an unconstitutional mandate requiring Americans to buy private insurance."

Walz own statement directly contradicted Sutton's.

"Repealing the Affordable Care Act will eliminate consumer protections, put insurance companies between you and your doctors, raise taxes on small businesses, and explode the deficit," said Walz. "It will be bad for our economy and jobs in places like southern Minnesota

that have a robust health care industry."

He offered a story of constituents who have already been helped by the new law. "[J]ust a few weeks ago, I received a letter from a dad in southern Minnesota named Paul. Paul's son Joe is 21 years old, works part time and has Type II diabetes," Walz wrote. "Joe couldn't get the insurance he needed to pay for the expensive equipment and treatment he needs. But because of the new law we passed, Joe was able to get back on his parent's insurance and his new insurance card came a couple of weeks ago in the mail.

He added, "A vote to repeal this legislation is a vote to tear that insurance card out of Joe's hand and so I voted against it."

Minnesota's other DFL representatives explained their vote against repeal as well.

"Repealing the health reform law and enacting the Republican 'No Care/No Jobs' bill means dumping 32 million Americans from health coverage - including almost 12,000 young adults in Minnesota," wrote Rep. Keith Ellison. "Additionally, this 'No Care/No Jobs' bill adds another \$230 billion to our federal budget deficit."

"Denying health care to millions of Americans doesn't create jobs," he added. "The American people deserve better from their elected leaders."

Ellison's neighbor to the east, Rep. Betty McCollum, was concerned that a repeal might negatively impact American Indian and Alaskan Native communities.

"Tribal leaders from across the country worked tirelessly to pass this law," she said. "Today, Republicans in Congress are voting to repeal expanded health care for Native Americans, and they are abandoning the federal government's trust responsibility to provide these services to tribal members. Two million American Indians and Alaskan Natives would have vital health care services stripped by House Republicans."

A press release from the White House featured 14 Democratic state legislators railing against repeal efforts, including Minnesota's own Reps. Erin Murphy of St. Paul and Tom Huntley of Duluth.

"Repealing the Affordable Care Act means repealing affordable coverage for Minnesotans with preexisting conditions like asthma or diabetes," said Murphy. "Repealing the Affordable Care Act represents a fatal step backwards and the consequence is a less stable, more costly health care system for Minnesotans."

Huntley said, "Every day, Minnesotans are coming to appreciate the Affordable Care Act more and more. Adult children are being offered coverage on their parents' policy, seniors are getting help with the costly donut hole, and small businesses are adding jobs because the tax credit is helping them provide health coverage."

Republicans on the other hand were vociferous in their support for a repeal of the health care law.

"Obamacare, as we know, is the crown jewel of socialism. It is socialized medicine," Bachmann said from the House floor just before the vote. "The American people spoke soundly and clearly at the ballot box in November and they said to us, Mr. Speaker, in no uncertain terms, 'Repeal this bill.'"

(An ABC/Washington Post poll released this week challenges the assertion; it found that only 18 percent of Americans favor repealing the entire health care reform law. Thirty-seven percent favor repealing all or part of the law.)

Bachmann added, "And to those across the United States who think this may be a symbolic act, we have a message for them: this is not symbolic. This is why we were sent here and we will not stop until we repeal a President and put a President in the White House who will repeal this bill, until we repeal the current Senate, put in a Senate that will listen to the American people and repeal this bill."

Rep. John Kline said that health care reform costs too much.

"Almost one year ago Democrats launched a nearly \$1 trillion government takeover of health care that increases national health care spending by \$311 billion over 10 years and levies more than \$500 billion in new taxes on individuals, consumers, and businesses," he said. "The 2,700 page law has led to more than 4,000 pages in new rules and regulations - and the law is only 10 months old. The uncertainty of what this all means for individuals and businesses today - and in the months and years to come - is having a chilling effect on the country's job creators."

Freshman Rep. Chip Cravaack was a bit more measured in his tone.

"I agree all Minnesotans should have access to high quality, affordable health care," he said. "However, I do not support the increased regulation, taxation and government interference found in the 2,400 page, \$1 trillion legislation President Obama signed into law last year. The country can't afford it, and it serves as a massive over-reach on behalf of the federal government."

"Fortunately, this will not be the only vote I take on health care," Cravaack added. "Now that the House has voted to repeal Obamacare, I intend to work to ensure it is replaced with legislation that expands the accessibility of coverage, lowers costs and focuses on the quality of patient care - without laying the bill at the feet of Minnesota taxpayers and future generations of Americans."

Rep. Erik Paulsen, who has been a champion of medical technology corporations in Minnesota, said his vote for repeal was in part to help them.

"Repeal is the first step in bringing meaningful, affordable and patient-centered health care reform for all Americans in an open and transparent manner," he said. "The repeal today will also stop a \$20 billion tax burden on the life-saving medical device industry, a burden that falls on the hundreds on medical technology companies that reside in my district."